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Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

Programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2004: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report reviews the progress achieved by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 2004. It covers the activities of the Population Division dealing with the analysis of fertility, mortality and international migration; world population estimates and projections; population policies and population ageing; population and development; monitoring, coordination and dissemination of population information; and technical cooperation in populatior This report provides highlights of the major activities of the Population Division: technical publications, wallcharts, expert meetings, training, and dissemination of results, including through the Internet.

The objective of the subprogramme in population is to increase understanding of the nature of demographic phenomena, in particular the interrelations between population and development. The Commission on Population and Development provides intergovernmental guidance to the subprogramme.

The Commission may wish to take note of this report.

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Introduction

1. The subprogramme in population in the United Nations Secretariat falls under the responsibility of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005 was formulated on the basis of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. The programme of work takes into account the recommendations of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly at which the Assembly adopted the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex), and other relevant international conferences.

2. As described in the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 (A/57/6/Rev.1), the objective of the subprogramme in population is to increase understanding of the nature of demographic phenomena, in particular the interrelationships between population and development. The Commission on Population and Development provides intergovernmental guidance to the subprogramme.

3. Specifically, the expected accomplishments for the subprogramme in population, as presented in the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/58/6 (Sect. 9)), are:

(a) Increased understanding and awareness of Member States and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, of the issues in the field of population and development, such as international migration, population ageing and the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

(b) Improved and timely access by Governments and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to the United Nations population estimates and projections as well as other research findings in the field of population and development, in print and via the Internet.

4. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to collaborate closely with organizations, funds, programmes and other bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of the work programme and in connection with the follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development. Permanent Missions to the United Nations, national government offices, United Nations offices, researchers and the public regularly consult the Population Division regarding data, information and analyses on population and development issues.

5. The present report deals with the research and technical cooperation work and information activities carried out by the Population Division during 2004. This report provides a substantive summary of the activities and outputs of the Population Division: technical publications, wallcharts, expert meetings, training, and dissemination of results, including through the Internet.

I. Fertility and family planning

6. The Population Division has issued a wallchart entitled *World Fertility Patterns 2004*,[1] which shows recent data on selected fertility indicators. For all

countries with more than 100,000 inhabitants in 2000, as well as for major areas and regions, the chart shows age-specific fertility rates, total fertility and the mean age at childbearing for two periods, around 1970 and around 2000. According to these data, the number of countries with total fertility below replacement level increased more than fourfold from 1970 to 2000. Parallel, the proportion of countries with total fertility of 5 children or more per woman more than halved during the 30-year period. While recent fertility levels are below replacement in all developed countries, they remain above 5 children per woman in most of sub-Saharan Africa and in some countries in Central America and Asia. As the wallchart illustrates, the decline of fertility has been accompanied by major shifts in the timing of childbearing. In most developing countries, the mean age at childbearing declined as the fertility of older women fell, whereas in developed countries, the mean age at childbearing has been rising as women postpone the beginning of childbearing.

7. In 2004, the Population Division issued the final version of the "World Fertility Report 2003". For each country, the report presents a profile showing data on marriage, contraceptive use, fertility and national policies with respect to family formation and planning for 194 countries and areas of the world. Each country profile includes 43 indicators for the early 1970s and for the most recent period with data available. A discussion of main findings is also included in the Report; these main findings are provided in all the official languages of the United Nations. As a complement to the Report, a CD-ROM entitled "World Fertility and Marriage Indicators" has been issued. It contains the key indicators on marriage and fertility included in the "World Fertility Report 2003".

8. The Population Division also issued in 2004 a CD-ROM entitled "World Contraceptive Use 2003", which includes two data sets. The first presents the most recent estimates of contraceptive prevalence measured as the percentage of women using contraception among all women of reproductive age who are married or in union. Prevalence is also presented by method of contraception. The second data set includes trend data on contraceptive prevalence for countries with information for two periods between 1990 and 2002. Trend data on two types of measures are included: (a) prevalence of any method of contraception and (b) prevalence of any modern method of contraception.

9. During 2004, the Population Division undertook a special study on the prevalence of childlessness among women nearing the end of the reproductive lifespan. According to this study, the median prevalence of childlessness in developing countries is 4.5 per cent for women aged 45-49. For the 37 countries of Africa considered, the median level of childlessness among women aged 45-49 is 3.4 per cent. Among the 33 countries of Asia and Oceania, it is 4.6 per cent; and in the 24 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, it amounts to 7.1 per cent. The median level of childlessness among women aged 45-49 in developed countries is twice as high as that in developing countries. In half of the 24 developed countries with available data, the proportion of women aged 45-49 who are childless exceeds 9 per cent and it is close to 20 per cent in Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States of America. Furthermore, past trends in childlessness in developed countries suggest that their levels of female childlessness are likely to rise over the medium-term future.

10. The presentation of findings related to fertility and family planning in many formats — publications, wallcharts, CD-ROMS and on the Internet — has meant improved and timely access to the information by Governments and civil society.

II. Mortality and health

11. The Population Division has developed a database to compile and organize mortality data and indicators relative to different time periods for as many countries as possible. The information in the database serves as the basis for the further analysis and modelling of mortality, including the analysis of trends and their extrapolation into the future. So far, the database includes life tables produced by national statistical offices and reported to the United Nations Statistics Division, life tables estimated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and model life tables, plus life tables estimated under the Human Mortality Database project led by the University of California at Berkeley.

12. From the Population Division's database, a CD-ROM has been prepared containing key mortality indicators for two periods: the early 1970s and the most recent possible period for each country according to data availability. The CD-ROM includes the following indicators for countries with data available: life expectancy at birth by sex, life expectancy at age 15, life expectancy at age 60, the probability of surviving from age 15 to age 60, and the probability of surviving from age 60 to age 80.

13. The report of the Workshop on HIV/AIDS and Adult Mortality in Developing Countries (New York, 8-13 September 2003) has been prepared for publication. The Workshop combined a technical meeting and a training activity for government officials from countries in Africa working in the area of HIV/AIDS. The report, which presents the proceedings of the Workshop and includes all papers prepared by experts, increased the understanding and awareness of Governments about this crucial issue.

III. International migration

14. The Population Division organized the Third Coordination Meeting on International Migration on 27 and 28 October 2004. The Meeting brought together about 40 participants from the United Nations Secretariat, regional commissions and United Nations funds, programmes and organizations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and other international and regional organizations active in the area of international migration. The focus of the Meeting was on substantive issues that might be considered by the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that will be conducted by the General Assembly during its sixty-first session in 2006. Participants also exchanged information on the most recent activities of their organizations in the area of international migration and development. All material relating to the Meeting is available on the Population Division web site. The Division will issue a report of the Meeting and all the papers contributed by participating organizations in a working paper. The meetings and the report improve access of Governments to information on migration and increase understanding of migration issues that are at the forefront of international deliberations.

15. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/208 of 23 December 2003, the Population Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development (A/59/325) for the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly and presented it to the Second Committee under agenda item 87 (b) (International migration and development). The report provided an update of the activities relating to international migration and development carried out within the United Nations system and of United Nations cooperation with relevant intergovernmental organizations. The report also reviewed major initiatives of Member States to create a multilateral framework for improving the management of international migration. While such efforts have advanced more at the regional level, there are a number of recent initiatives to develop a global framework to facilitate cooperation, including the Berne Initiative, the Global Commission on International Migration and the call of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the preparation of a non-binding multilateral framework for a rights-based approach to labour migration.

16. The report also suggested options for the United Nations with respect to addressing international migration and development issues, in particular by continuing to promote the ratification and implementation of existing legal instruments on international migration; strengthening its substantive and technical work on international migration; assisting Governments in achieving a better understanding of international migration trends and the strategies to address them; and providing a forum for the exchange of information and coordination of activities on international migration. The aforementioned High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development scheduled to be held in 2006 will provide a further opportunity for the consideration of strategies and mechanisms to address the many facets of the issue.

17. The Population Division issued a database entitled *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2003 Revision* (POP/DB/MIG/Rev.2003), which contains a revised and expanded set of estimates of the number of international migrants by sex in each country or area of the world as of 1 July of 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000. The estimates indicate that the number of international migrants in the world increased from an estimated 76 million in 1960 to almost 175 million in 2000. The estimates are derived mostly from data on the number of foreign-born persons enumerated by censuses. The database also includes the population in each country or area for each reference year, the growth rate of the number of international migrants in each country over each decade, the percentage of international migrants among the total population, the percentage of female migrants among all international migrants, and the percentage distribution of international migrants by major area or region.

18. The Population Division contributed to part two of the *World Economic and Social Survey, 2004* prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). International migration was selected as the special theme of the *Survey*, for which the Population Division prepared three chapters. Chapter II discussed levels and trends of international migration; chapter III analysed the policies and views of Governments regarding international migration; and chapter VIII examined existing mechanisms for international cooperation in the area of international migration.

19. These activities on international migration, as a package, will play an important role in increasing understanding and preparing for the High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly.

IV. World population projections

20. The Population Division has issued the third and final volume of the 2002 Revision of its biennial *World Population Prospects*.[2] This volume, entitled *Analytical Report*, analyses the results of the demographic estimates and projections for 228 countries of the world, its regions and major areas and provides a summary view on the dominant demographic trends between 1950 and 2050. It documents the fact that world population will continue to grow, from 6.1 billion in 2000 to 8.9 billion in 2050. The analytical report also shows the increasing diversity of population dynamics among the countries and regions of the world, where the population of the more developed regions of the world is currently rising at an annual rate of 0.25 per cent, that of the less developed regions is increasing nearly six times as fast, at 1.5 per cent, and the 49 least developed countries are experiencing even more rapid population growth (2.4 per cent per year). As a consequence, the population of the more developed regions will be declining after 2010, whereas the population of the less developed regions will rise by 2.9 billion between 2000 and 2050.

21. The results of the 2003 revision of world urbanization prospects have been published in the report entitled *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2003 Revision*,[3] as well as in a CD-ROM. In addition, the results have been made available on the Population Division web site (www.unpopulation.org), as a user-friendly database for retrieving or downloading tables. According to the *2003 Revision*, 48 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas in 2003. By 2007, the proportion is projected to exceed 50 per cent, thus marking the first time in history that the world will have more urban-dwellers than rural residents. By 2030, the proportion of the world population that is urban is expected to rise to 61 per cent. The largest urban agglomeration, Tokyo, had 35 million inhabitants in 2003. After Tokyo, the next largest urban agglomerations in the world are Mexico City (18.7 million), New York-Newark (18.3 million), São Paulo (17.9 million) and Mumbai (Bombay) (17.4 million).

22. The Population Division has issued the final report of its new set of long-range projections, greatly extending the projection horizon of *World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision* to 2300. The report, entitled *World Population to 2300*, which is also available online at the Population Division web site, contains a concise analysis of the main findings of the projection results, plus a set of relevant essays.

23. In the medium scenario, world population would rise from 6.4 billion persons in 2003 to about 9 billion persons in 2300. Africa's share of the world population would double, from 13 per cent in 2003 to 24 per cent in 2300. Europe's share would be halved, from 12 per cent today to 7 per cent in 2300. India, China and the United States would continue to be the most populous countries in the world. The world's populations will continue to age rapidly: the median age of the world will rise from 26 years in 2003 to nearly 50 years in 2300. According to the medium scenario, the number of persons aged 60 years or over will rise from 10 per cent of the world population in 2003 to 38 per cent in 2300. The proportion aged 80 years or over will rise from just 1 per cent in 2003 to 17 per cent in 2300.

24. The Population Division has recently completed the 2004 Revision of its biennial world population estimates and projections to the year 2050. The results of

the 2004 Revision will be published in three volumes (volume I: Comprehensive Tables; volume II: Sex and Age Distribution of Populations; and volume III: Analytical Report); in a wallchart; and on a CD-ROM. The complete results have been made available on the Population Division web site as a user-friendly database.

25. The population estimates and projections provide the basic information for understanding the gamut of population and development issues and increasing awareness of these issues.

V. Population policies

26. *World Population Policies, 2003*[4] was published during 2004. The study revealed that the most significant demographic concern in the world among Governments is HIV/AIDS. Other major concerns include low fertility, and population ageing, in developed countries and rapid population growth, and infant, child and maternal mortality, in developing countries. The publication was issued in three formats: a hard-copy version, a CD-ROM and a web-based downloadable version.

27. Evaluation and analysis of the United Nations Ninth Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development is under way. Responses from some 80 countries (53 developing countries), representing 80 per cent of world population have, so far, been received. The results of the quinquennial Inquiry will be incorporated into *World Population Policies, 2005*, as well as provide the foundation for the understanding of population issues by Member States.

28. As mentioned above, a chapter on international migration policies was prepared for the *World Economic and Social Survey, 2004*. According to the findings of the study, during the past decades, the number of Governments adopting measures to manage migration has significantly increased. By 2003, for example, one third of countries had policies in place to lower immigration, compared with just 7 per cent of countries in 1976. National policies have evolved in a number of ways since the mid-1970s. Although countries are gradually imposing more restrictive immigration measures, a growing number of countries are simultaneously seeking to alleviate labour shortages by promoting the migration of highly skilled workers. For the majority of developed countries, family reunification remains the foundation for accepting migrants. To facilitate migration, receiving countries are increasingly adopting policies that focus on the integration of non-nationals. In 2003, 61 countries reported that programmes were in place for the integration of non-nationals, up from 52 countries in 1996. Policies for the integration of non-nationals are more prevalent in the receiving countries of the more developed regions than those of the developing regions. Integration of migrants has been undertaken through programmes to improve linguistic and vocational competence, combating discrimination, easing the process for acquisition of nationality and recognizing dual citizenship. International migration is increasingly being viewed as making an important contribution to the socio-economic development of sending countries by, among other things, providing a major source of foreign exchange from migrant remittances.

VI. Population ageing

29. A study on "Living Arrangements of Older Persons around the World" will appear in 2005. The executive summary will be available in all official United Nations languages, in order to provide improved and timely access to findings concerning this issue. Using census and survey data from more than 130 countries, the study provides comparative analyses of patterns and trends of living arrangements of people aged 60 years or over. Aspects covered by the study include co-residence with family and members and others, solitary living and institutionalization of older persons. The study examines the social and economic correlates of living arrangements and also incorporates factors such as the number of living children and the flow of informal support transfers based on newly released data from a special survey on older persons in Latin American and Caribbean countries.

30. The study shows that the majority of older persons in developed countries live alone or with a spouse only, while in most developing countries, a large majority live with children or other relatives. Nonetheless, a worldwide trend can be observed, namely, that an increasing proportion of older persons live alone. The proportion living only with the spouse is also increasing, while the proportion living with children has tended to decline. Those trends are seen in a substantial number of countries in all world regions. Owing to the predominance of women among unmarried older persons and among the oldest old, women make up a large majority of older persons living alone and in institutions such as nursing homes. Worldwide, approximately 1 in 7, or 90 million persons aged 60 years or over, live alone, and women account for about 60 million of that number. The study also found that within developing countries, older persons who live alone are relatively disadvantaged, as indicated by information on household amenities.

31. The study also found that "skipped generation" households, in which older persons reside with grandchildren but without children, are common in many countries, especially in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. In some African countries, repeated surveys show that skipped-generation households are becoming more common, a trend that is probably due to the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has increased the number of orphaned children. In several African countries, 20-25 per cent of older persons are now living in skipped-generation households, and for older women, the proportion exceeds 30 per cent in a few countries. Skipped-generation households also tend to be relatively poor.

32. A new edition of the wallchart Population Ageing 2005 has been prepared for publication in 2005, in order to increase awareness of the many facets of population ageing. For 228 countries or areas as well as for regions and the world, the wallchart presents comparable indicators including absolute and relative numbers of the older population, proportions currently married, living alone and in the labour force among both older men and women, the sex ratio of populations aged 60 years or over and aged 80 years or over, the potential support ratio, the statutory retirement age for men and women, and life expectancy at age 60 for men and women. The new version updates the wallchart *Population Ageing 2002*[5] and adds information on the percentage of older persons who live alone.

33. The chart shows that, because women's life expectancy is almost always greater than that of men, the majority of older persons are women. Despite dramatic

improvements in longevity in most countries, large differences in life expectancy at older ages still prevail between countries. The chart also shows that the proportion over age 60 is currently much higher in the more developed than in the less developed regions, but the pace of ageing in developing countries is more rapid, and their transition from a young to an old age-structure will be more compressed in time. Between 2000 and 2050, most countries will experience a substantial decline in the potential support ratio, that is to say, the ratio of the number of persons of working age to the number of older persons.

VII. Population and development

34. The report entitled *The Impact of AIDS*,[6] published in 2004, increases the awareness of Governments and non-governmental organization in respect of the many consequences of the AIDS epidemic. The study examines the demographic, social and economic consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. HIV/AIDS is found to have a heavy impact on households, which are the first units affected by the disease. The death of the breadwinner often leads to the impoverishment of the household. HIV/AIDS has led to an explosion in the number of orphans in hard-hit countries as parents die from the disease. Although it is common for relatives to take these orphans into their own homes, the study shows that the rapid rise in the number of orphans is threatening to overwhelm the traditional support system of the extended family. The study shows that in the most affected countries, the epidemic is elevating costs and lowering productivity of business firms, increasing food insecurity, crippling the already inadequate health systems, and depleting the pool of qualified teachers. Overall, the study suggests that the impact of HIV/AIDS on socio-economic development is likely to intensify in the near future.

35. The fourth version of the database on *Population, Resources, Environment and Development* has been finalized. The new version, *PRED Bank 2004*, includes selected indicators from the 2002 Revision of the United Nations world population estimates and projections and the 2003 edition of *National Population Policies*, both prepared by the Population Division, as well as economic, social and environmental indicators from the United Nations and other international organizations. Besides updating the information contained in the previous version of the database, *PRED Bank 2004* includes new indicators such as literacy of young adults and revised school enrolment indicators. This new version also presents improvements to the user interface. The data bank is being made available on CD-ROM, and an Internet version of the database and user interface is under preparation.

36. Work is ongoing on a report on "National Trends in Population, Resources, Environment and Development: Country Profiles". This publication will update and expand a previous version of the document that was last issued in 1997. The report will present, for each country, a set of time-series indicators on population trends and policies, labour force, education, economic and social development, land, water and energy use. The data contained in the report will be drawn from the *PRED Bank 2004* database.

VIII. Monitoring, coordination and dissemination of population information

A. Monitoring of population trends and policies

37. During 2004, the Population Division prepared the latest edition of its annual monitoring report for the Commission on Population and Development. The topic of the report for the thirty-eighth (2005) session of the Commission is "Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty", as decided in Commission decision 2004/1. The report provides recent information on HIV/AIDS, considering the biological, social and related determinants of HIV/AIDS, its effect on mortality, population growth and orphanhood, its relationship to migration and geographical mobility, its interaction with fertility and sexual behaviour, national HIV/AIDS policies, prevention, treatment and care for persons living with AIDS, and its relationship to development and poverty.

B. Population web sites

1. Population Division web site (www.unpopulation.org)

38. During 2004, the Population Division continued to update and expand its web site in order to provide timely access by Governments and civil society to population information. The Population Division web site, among other things, provides information on recently issued Population Division research publications. All or selected parts of publications appear, as well as highlights, key findings, proceedings of meetings and wallcharts. Examples of new items on the Population Division web site are reports on world population projections, Millennium Development Goals, and progress in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[7] HIV/AIDS, international migration, fertility and population policies. The web site also includes documents of the Commission on Population and Development.

2. United Nations Population Information Network (www.popin.org)

39. Complementing the Population Division web site in providing easy and timely access to population information is the United Nations Population Information Network (POPIN). POPIN provides a portal to the wealth of population information and data available throughout the United Nations system. Maintenance and further development are undertaken on a continuing basis, to ensure that broken links are promptly repaired and that new online population resources offered by the United Nations and the specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system are reflected in the POPIN web site as soon as they go online. Analysis of the traffic to the POPIN web site shows that POPIN is a major channel for the dissemination of the population information generated by the United Nations, with an annual number of pages visited in excess of half a million.

IX. Technical cooperation

40. The Population Division has continued to implement activities in the area of technical cooperation. As an example of the synergies between its analytical and

technical cooperation activities, the Division has established and supports an automatic e-mail announcements service alerting subscribers to the release of new Population Division publications. The service currently has over 1,000 subscribers, including subscribers from over 70 developing countries. The production and distribution to developing countries of *MORTPAK for Windows*, the Population Division's software package for demographic estimation, also continue to be handled by the technical cooperation programme, as is the Population Division database, *The PRED Bank: The Database for Population Resources, Environment and Development*. Information on Population Division activities and outputs of particular relevance to developing countries is also regularly fed into the other mailing lists so as to better reach those constituencies.

Notes

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XIII.12.

[2] United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.03.XIII.6 and E.03.XIII.7 (vols. I and II).

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XIII.6.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XIII.3.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.XIII.2.

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XIII.7.

[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

Annex

Publications, expert group meetings and other materials prepared or organized by the Population Division, 2004

Expert group meetings

Third Coordination Meeting on International Migration, 27 and 28 October 2004, New York.

Seminar on the Relevance of Population Aspects for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, 17-19 November 2004, New York.

Research studies

World Population Monitoring 2002: Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health. ST/ESA/SER.A/215. Sales No. E.02.XIII.14.

Partnership and Reproductive Behaviour in Low-Fertility Countries. ST/ESA/SER.A/221.

The Impact of AIDS. ST/ESA/SER.A/229. Sales No. E.04.XIII.7.

World Population Policies 2003. ST/ESA/SER.A/230. Sales No. E.04.XIII.3.

World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision, vol. III, *Analytical Report.* ST/ESA/SER.A/233.

Review and Appraisal of the Progress Made in Achieving the Goals and Objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development: The Concise Report. ST/ESA/SER.A/235.

World Population to 2300. ST/ESA/SER.A/236.

World Fertility Report, 2003. ESA/P/WP.189.

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2003 Revision: Data Tables and Highlights. ESA/P/WP.190.

Second Coordination Meeting on International Migration. ESA/P/WP.191.

Wallcharts

World Contraceptive Use, 2003. ST/ESA/SER.A/227. Sales No. E.04.XIII.2.

Urban and Rural Areas, 2003. ST/ESA/SER.A/231. Sales No. E.04.XIII.4.

Urban Agglomerations, 2003. ST/ESA/SER.A/232. Sales No. E.04.XIII.5.

Periodicals

Population Newsletter, No. 76 (December 2003).

Population Newsletter, No. 77 (June 2004).